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STUDENT TROUBLESHOOTS CITY PROBLEMS TO EARN DEGREE, CANADA COUNCIL AWARD TOO

You won't hear Barry Sookman griping about the 'irrelevance' of university education. During the past couple of years at Concordia's Sir George Williams Campus, he has designed his own academic program, courses that took him out of the classroom and into the city.

Sookman is one of Concordia's Undergraduate Scholars, a carefully chosen group of about two dozen students who must demonstrate to the university that they know pretty precisely what they want from a B.A. and in return are allowed to tailor independent study programs.

What Barry Sookman wanted was knowhow in dealing with urban environmental problems. From regular groundwork courses in economics, geography and political science, he progressed through a range of fieldwork projects.

Recently Sookman has been concerned with occupational health hazards. In the wake of growing evidence linking disease to working conditions, Sookman's advisor Professor Fred Knelman has been planning a study into occupational health problems and prospects throughout Canada.

Last summer, a Carling-O'Keefe grant enabled Knelman to hire Sookman to do survey work preliminary to the study. Sookman's job was digging up data and generally plotting the direction the study would take. Right now, Knelman is ready to go ahead, pending funds.

A previous project of Sookman's in solid waste management involved setting up recycling depots in the Ville St-Laurent area, testing citizen response and studying the economics of recycling.

In 1974 Sookman joined Save Montreal and was instrumental in organizing a conference on city planning in Canada held in Montreal that spring. He is currently on the Board of Directors of that organization.

Sookman plans to continue his studies in urban problems. He is one of 100 arts and social science graduates in Canada to receive a \$5500 Canada Council grant for work towards a master's degree.

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